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"The Tables of the Jewish Law"

IN 1847, in the course of a speech on a Jewish Disabilities Bill, Disraeli asserted, with characteristic inexactitude but with ample justification, that "in Europe . . . the Christian Church has covered every kingdom with sacred buildings, *and over every altar . . . we find the tables of the Jewish law.*"[1] Whatever may have been the case in other kingdoms, "the tables of the Jewish law," the Ten Commandments, were normally to be found a hundred years ago, together with the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer, set up in writing over the altars of the Church of England. In 1843—just a hundred years ago—Dr Pusey, when corresponding about the furnishing of the church he was building at Leeds with a member of the Cambridge Camden Society, said: "I cannot but think that the Ten Commandments, with their strict warning voice, are far more valuable to us as attendants on the altar, than images or pictures or tapestry would be."[2] In some churches they are still to be seen in that position; in others you may discover that they have been removed to the walls of the belfry, or to some other obscure part of the building; but in most they are now missing. Fifty years ago, or even more recently, if you attended divine service in the Church of England on any Sunday morning, you would hear the Ten Commandments read as a matter of course. The odds are heavily against your hearing them if you attend divine service in these days. According to the Book of Common Prayer, every child who is brought to the bishop to be confirmed is required to have learned the Ten Commandments. When I was confirmed, that requirement was still complied with; I suspect that it is commonly regarded more lightly to-day.

There may be many circumstances that have caused the Ten Commandments thus to have been relegated to the shade in the modern Church. I will indicate only one or two. (1) Doubtless this is part and parcel of the process by which, since the onset of the higher criticism of the Bible and the comparative study of religions, the authority of the Old Testament, and especially of the Pentateuch, is thought to have been diminished, if not sapped. Churchmen do not nowadays handle the Old Testament with ease or confidence, except for selected bits and pieces. (2) Then, there has been a widespread desire for a simplification of religious belief, for a concentration on "the essence of Christianity," which it was supposed could be found in the New Testament alone, and, in fact, in quite a small part of that. Strangely enough, the Sermon on the Mount came to be regarded as the simple, admirable and manageable epitome of a once elaborate creed. (3) Along with this, and probably most to the point, there went the notion that Christianity is a religion of love, and not of law. Naturally,

[1] Monypenny and Buckle, iii, 69. [2] Liddon, *Life of Pusey*, ii, 477.

therefore, the Ten Commandments were depreciated, if not deprecated, and particularly so because most of them are in the form of prohibitions. The extraordinary idea gained ground that modern men, and above all modern children, no longer needed to be prohibited from doing evil. All that they needed was to be left free to reach forward to still higher virtue. Prohibitions might perhaps be retained on the Statute Book without harm, but as little as possible should be said about them. To call attention to them was the mark of an obsolete pedagogy.

Such, I presume, were some of the causes that led to the Ten Commandments being consigned to the shade, where they have so far remained. The results, whether or not precisely consequent upon this consignment, have not been happy. There has been a gathering, ominous and even rapid dissolution of the sense of there being an objective standard of conduct, which all men are bound to obey. In the international and domestic politics of Europe, not to look farther afield, and in the everyday life of society, especially where its concourse is most active and influential, there has been the spread of moral and religious indifference, of relativism, of scepticism, and finally of nihilism. As Canon Peter Green says in his recently published reflections on *The Moral Condition of Great Britain To-day*,[1] "Let it be granted that during the last quarter of the nineteenth century many people did wrong. What is alarming to-day is that they do the same things and deny that they are wrong, or go even further and deny that there is any objective standard of right and wrong binding on men and women."

It is not surprising that, where this descent is being noted with alarm, good men should call upon other people to mark the error of their ways, and should even begin to mark the error of their own. Thus, while British publicists, preachers and propagandists are loud in their denunciation of the rejection by their foes in war of traditional conceptions of law and justice, there are those who begin to wonder what, after all, they themselves believe to be the ultimate sources or foundations of the law and justice for which they profess to be fighting.

As yet, it cannot be said that many have reached the conclusion that it is through discarding or disregarding "the tables of the Jewish law" that we have been brought to the present pass. Nevertheless, since Holy Scripture supplies some warrant for thinking that it is the conclusion to which we shall be driven in the end, it may not be too soon to consider it. And indeed, is it to be expected that any final sanctions are to be found in such half-way houses or transient phenomena as the principles of Western civilization or of democracy or of socialism? These may point to or connect with some final or ultimate authority; they can hardly be themselves its ground or source. When men begin to prosecute their search beyond or behind these unsatisfying slogans, what will they find, or what will find them?

There are some Christians at present who hope to find a resting-place or a common ground in the traditional conception of a law of

[1] Mowbray, 1s.

nature.[1] This conception is certainly relevant, but unhappily an inspection of tradition discloses that there have been many conceptions of this law of nature; and there are remarkable differences between the conceptions of the Fathers, of the Schoolmen, of the Reformers, and of the Philosophers of the Enlightenment. That of St Thomas Aquinas is doubtless the most finely conceived, and the most comprehensive so far as general principles go. It sheds little direct light, however, on the content or precepts of the law which all men to-day may be called upon to regard as binding. But though an inspection of traditional doctrines may bewilder him who seeks for a clear definition of the content of the law of nature, he will be struck by the fact that the Fathers,[2] St Thomas[3] and Calvin,[4] to mention no others, are at least agreed, with only minor qualifications, in affirming that the Decalogue is a divine promulgation of precepts of the law of nature which they admit to be, apart from that, more or less obscure. It would seem that those who believe light to have been shed upon this obscurity through the tables of the Jewish law ought to go straight to the light, and not wander about in regions which have become even more obscure than they were.

In any case, Christian preachers, commissioned to expound the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, should not be uncertain where they ought to go, and to what they ought to call attention. The law, of which the Scriptures speak, is part of the Torah—that is, divine instruction, the utterance or address of the Lord God, making known His will. If there is also an immanent principle in nature, as the Stoics taught, which corresponds to this law, well, the Scriptures have very little to say about that. Maybe it is a subject for philosophers rather than for preachers.

The New Testament, as well as the Old, is rooted in the assumption that the God, who is the Creator and Redeemer of all mankind, has made known His commandments through Moses and the prophets. "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good"; this is the testimony of both Testaments. It is true that, in the light of the new covenant inaugurated at Pentecost, the old covenant of Sinai is seen to have been preparatory and incomplete, but it is not written off. It is true that, when the Messiah had come and the new Israel had been founded, the Mosaic law was seen to be no longer binding in the form in which it had been elaborated to meet the actual conditions under which the old Israel lived; but the original Ten Commandments or Ten Words, of which the Mosaic law was a composite expansion adapted to those conditions, were not abrogated; they were reaffirmed and fulfilled.

It must, however, be confessed that the biblical teaching about the law of God or the law of Christ is not simple. That is because the world and God's dealings with it are not so simple as we might wish. It is

[1] For a brief historical exposition of the teaching on this subject that is to be found in the Fathers and in St Thomas Aquinas, see Joseph Dalby, *The Catholic Conception of the Law of Nature* (S.P.C.K., 2s. 6d.). This booklet does not, however, set out to deal either with the biblical background of the conception or with its modern application.

[2] Cp. Dalby, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

[3] *Summa Theol.*, I-II, Q. 98, A. 5, and Q. 100, A. 1.

[4] *Inst.*, II, vii, 1.

reasonable that preachers should be asked to explain what they are commissioned to say about the law of God as simply—*i.e.*, as clearly and concisely—as possible. The doctrine of the three uses or offices of the law seems to be the most serviceable for this purpose, and it is strange that our English divines have almost completely disregarded it, and do so still. It was first put into definite shape at the time of the Reformation,[1] when the Church had to clarify its testimony about the issue of legalism, but it is not a peculiarly Protestant doctrine. On the contrary, it appears to be a systematic statement or summary of the teaching of Scripture, and also of the Fathers—and of our Anglican divines, although, so far as I can ascertain, Bishop Hooper is the only one to have made formal use of it.[2]

There is a succinct statement of the doctrine in the Formula of Concord, and it should be noted that, while that was a Lutheran confession, those who drew it up evidently supposed that this particular statement about the three uses of the law would be generally accepted by Christian men, and after making it they proceeded to deal with some of its subsequent implications which were then in dispute, a dispute into which we are not now called upon to enter. The statement is as follows:

> It is established that the Law of God was given to men for three causes: first, that a certain external discipline might be preserved, and wild and intractable men might be restrained, as it were, by certain barriers; secondly, that by the Law men might be brought to an acknowledgement of their sins; thirdly, that regenerate men, to all of whom, nevertheless, much of the flesh still cleaves, for that very reason may have some certain rule after which they may and ought to shape their life.

These have been called the political use, the pedagogic use, and the didactic use of God's law. I shall say a little about each and about the relation between them.

The first office of the law is to preserve human society in wholesome existence, in a firm and tolerable framework of order and justice. "The first use" (of the law), wrote Hooper in 1548, "is civil and external, forbidding and punishing the transgression of politic and civil ordinance. . . . Wherefore God commandeth the magistrates and superior powers of the earth to punish the transgressors of the law made for the preservation of every commonwealth." It is this use of the law that seems to have been especially in the view of St Paul or "St Paul" the First Epistle to Timothy i, 8-11, where obviously he has the Ten Commandments in mind. He says also that this use of the law is "according to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God which was committed to my trust."

This use of the law is, then, not only an Old Testament ordinance, nor is it an Apostle's private opinion; it was part of the gospel that was committed to him. It is as part of the apostolic gospel that the political use of the law is to be proclaimed. So far from being abrogated by the Messiah and His Apostles, this use of the law was presupposed, and

[1] See, however, St Augustine, *Enchiridion*, c. cxviii.
[2] *Early Writings of John Hooper*, Parker Soc. ed., p. 282.

indeed was explicitly acknowledged. God has left it within the capacity of fallen men, of unregenerate men, to maintain an external, institutional compliance[1] with His commandments sufficient to prevent society from sinking into chaos, sufficient to preserve a rough but real justice.[2] We shall be thankful if this justice approximates to the standard of the Ten Commandments; and even so in modern times many Christians have held that the civil magistrate can be expected to have regard only to the second table of the law, and that he must, or at least may, leave the first table on one side, though it is not fashionable nowadays to use these terms or to speak so plainly.

Would those who uphold the church-establishment in England still say with Bishop Jewel[3] that "the prince is put in trust, as well with the first as with the second table of the law of God, that is to say, as well with religion as with temporal government; not only to keep and perform the contents of both tables in his own person (for so much every private man is bound to do), but also to see that all others his subjects, as well priests as laymen, each man in his calling, do duly keep them"? Is it the case that in a commonwealth that is not yet Christian, such as the Roman Empire in the first three centuries or the Indian Empire to-day, the civil power is put in trust by God only with the second table of the law, whereas in a Christian commonwealth, such as England in the sixteenth century, it is put in trust with both? But what then is the case of a commonwealth that is ceasing to be Christian? The distinction between the first and second tables of the law corresponds roughly to the modern distinction between "dogma" and "ethics." Does a time come when a civil power which has attended to both tables must, owing to a dissolution of Christian faith or a disintegration of the Christian Church, confine its attention to the second table only? On the other hand, do not both tables in the long run stand or fall together? These are questions to which neither Scripture nor tradition provides a direct answer, but to which we are having to find an answer.

While the first use of the law, which provides for the preservation of human existence whether by both tables or by the second only, is part of the gospel, yet there is no salvation in it, no justification. Society is preserved, but men are not saved, by civil obedience to the law of God, nor will they be saved by any "new ordering" of the same. This brings us to the second use of the law, the pedagogic use. "The second use of the law," says Hooper, "is to inform and instruct men aright,

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[1] Cp. *Bishop Sanderson's Lectures on Conscience and Human Law*, ed. C. Wordsworth (1877), pp. 262*f.*: "A lawgiver . . . may command the payment of a *debt*, the restitution of *stolen goods*, the *outward worship* of *God*; and he may forbid the sins of *theft*, *adultery*, *homicide*, or *blasphemy*. But he cannot command the *love* of our neighbour, or a *trust in God*, or contempt of the *world*; neither can he forbid the *coveting* our neighbour's goods, nor *unchaste thoughts*, nor the *hatred* of our neighbour, nor the *infidelity* of the heart . . . Almighty God has committed to the magistrate the government of the *outward* man; but the knowledge and judgment of *inward* acts, and the inspection and sovereignty of the heart, God has reserved entirely to Himself."

[2] "We are not to dream of a *Platonic*, or an *Utopian* administration; we may think ourselves well off, if we sink not into the *dregs* of social corruption." *Ibid.*, p. 265.

[3] *The Defence of the Apology*, Parker Soc. ed., p. 976.

what sin is, to accuse us, to fear us, and to damn us and our justice, because we perform not the law as it is required. Howbeit the law concludeth all men under sin, not to damn them, but to save them, if they come to Christ."

The fact that we have to be under the political use of the law, subject to external ordinances and coercive punishment, is a sign that something is radically wrong with us. But the law of God, when we hear its full demands, accuses us more fearfully than that. If we examine ourselves by the standard of the Ten Commandments we are all convicted of being miserable sinners. Still, with that standard alone, we might suppose, as the old Israel supposed, that, if only we tried harder, we might attain to justification and perfect righteousness by the works of the law.

It is when the Messiah discloses to us in His life and death what the fulfilment of the law requires, and when He expounds to us in the Sermon on the Mount the ultimate range of its demands, that we realize we are bound to an impossible task. The final statement of the law, not of the gospel, is to be found in the Sermon on the Mount. As Scott Holland said, "the Sermon that some lightly affect to be the whole Gospel of Christ would be by itself but a sentence of doom."[1] The law, said William Tyndale, "killeth our conscience, and driveth us to desperation; inasmuch as it requireth of us that which is unpossible for our nature to do. It requireth of us the deeds of a whole man. It requireth perfect love, from the low bottom and ground of the heart, as well in all things which we suffer, as in the things which we do."[2] If we can be justified only by love without any limit, by purity without any spot, by forgiveness without any reservation, by trust in God without any anxiety, then we are all lost and damned. The law is thus a pedagogue, a warder, not a schoolmaster, who brings home to sinners their bondage, and so enables them to turn to the Deliverer, who justifies them freely by His grace, by bestowing on them His Holy Spirit and incorporating them in His divine-manhood, the second Adam, the new Israel.

The grace of the Holy Ghost is in fact the new law, of which Jeremiah prophesied, which is written not on tables of stone, but on the inward parts of God's people. This new law is not an external ordinance nor an "unpossible" demand; it is law in a new sense. It is an indwelling principle, "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." As St Thomas Aquinas says: "That which is preponderant in the Law of the New Testament, and whereon all its efficacy is based, is the grace of the Holy Ghost, which is given through faith in Christ. Consequently the New Law is chiefly the grace itself of the Holy Ghost, which is given to those who believe in Christ."[3]

He says "chiefly," since after regeneration and conversion there is also the third use of the law (in the ordinary sense). By the second use of the law men are brought to repentance and to trust in Christ alone for their salvation and in His finished work for their justification. But

[1] *Creed and Character* (1887), pp. 238 *f.*
[2] *Doctrinal Treatises, etc.*, Parker Soc. ed., p. 10.
[3] *Summa Theol.*, I-II, Q. 106, A. 1.

they are not yet made perfect; the faithful, the regenerate, deceive themselves if they say that they have no sin (see Article XV). They still need teaching and guidance; they still need to be told not indeed by what works they can be justified, but what are the fruits of the Spirit which are to be brought forth by believers. This is the third or didactic office of the law. Thus, as St Thomas says: "There is a twofold element in the Law of the Gospel. There is the chief element, namely, the grace of the Holy Ghost bestowed inwardly. And as to this the New Law justifies . . . The other element of the Evangelical Law is secondary; namely, the teachings of faith, and those commandments which direct human affections and human actions. And as to this the New Law does not justify."[1]

Thus the Church militant on earth can never rightly discard, or be reticent about, the Ten Commandments, the tables of the law of Moses. Many evils come upon us when we disregard or disobey this law, as indeed Holy Scripture warns us. Certainly this law is now read to us by Christ, and this makes all the difference in the world. But the gospel has not superseded the law or left it behind. Believers are no longer under the bondage of the law, but, as St Augustine says, they are still "with the law."[2] The gospel itself requires us to be concerned with it, and with its three offices. We shall be concerned with it till the end of our lives, just as the Church must declare its three offices until the end of history.

A. R. V.

The Message of Carmel

The first World War produced a quite extraordinary outburst of interest in the life and message of St Francis of Assisi; the corresponding phenomenon in the present war may very well be a not less remarkable, though probably less widespread, movement towards the person and writings of St John of the Cross. For the impressions made by the two saints upon the mind of a superficial observer correspond fairly closely to the mental attitudes of the two periods. The joyous little Poor Man of Assisi, who claimed to be God's troubadour and who addressed the birds and the flowers as his brothers and sisters, had an obvious appeal at a time when it was believed that the end of the war would be the end of all wars and that a golden age of unending prosperity and brotherhood would dawn with the proclamation of peace; while to our present-day disillusioned minds the rigour and renunciation of the great Spanish Carmelite may seem to be truer to the facts of human life. First impressions, however, are seldom so deceptive as when they are first impressions of saints. It is all too easy to forget that the body of St Francis bore the stigmata of the Lord Jesus and to overlook the fact that the Doctor of the Dark Night was not only a man of the utmost gentleness and understanding in his dealings with souls, but was also the greatest lyric poet of his nation.

In spite of the obvious appeal which he has for many people to-day,

[1] *Summa Theol.*, I-II, Q. 106, A. 3. [2] *Homilies on St John*, iii, 2.

St John of the Cross is not an easy figure for them to understand. A mystic of the counter-Reformation, a Spaniard of Spain's great military age, a Carmelite friar, and a poet of exquisite sensibility—such a writer, by reason both of background and of temperament, needs a great deal of introduction to the English Christian of the twentieth century. The works on St John by Fr Bruno, C.D., and Fr Bede Frost make considerable demands on a beginner, while they are, of course, admirable for the student who has already made some progress. There are several excellent books of a small and popular type, but they are either *very* short, like Professor Allison Peers' Rede Lecture, or have the disadvantage of being written in a foreign idiom; among such may be mentioned Fr Ludovic de Besse's *Light on Mount Carmel*, the Abbé Hoornaert's *Burning Soul of St John of the Cross*, and Fr Gabriel of St Mary Magdalen's *St John of the Cross, Doctor of Divine Love*, concerning which its Benedictine translator disarmingly remarks that "whoever sets out to translate a theological work from one of the Latin languages into English soon realizes that English is not a Catholic language"! The philosophical student of mysticism is well catered for by the second part of M. Maritain's *Degrees of Knowledge*, with its recognition of St John as the Mystical Doctor *par excellence*, and by the brilliant but erratic Baruzi; but up till now there has been a real need of a book which will appeal to the ordinary educated Christian, who suspects that St John has something to say to him but knows little or nothing of Spanish history and literature and of mystical theology and psychology.

That need has been simultaneously met in two books now under review.[1] Professor Peers has long been recognized as the greatest living English authority on the Spanish mystics, and his translation of the works of St John from the critical edition of P. Silverio is not likely to be superseded. It is not, however, every scholar who can popularize his own subject; the publication of a popular, but in no sense trivial, work on St John from his pen is thus matter for real delight and gratitude. The former part of his book is historical and biographical; he places the saint in his actual spatial and temporal context and makes him a living figure. The works of St John are shown in their proper setting in his life. The latter part is devoted to expounding his relevance to the world of today; he is shown to be both the poet's poet and also the mystic's mystic; but perhaps the most valuable section of the book consists of the two chapters which are frankly headed "Stumbling-Blocks." Professor Peers makes it plain both that the teaching of St John is of the utmost relevance to any sincere and serious Christian, and also that, because the saint wrote for the most part expressly for Carmelites, a certain intelligent adaptation is needed to show the precise application of his teaching to those whose vocation lies not in the cell but in the world. The sternness of St John's language is shown not to go one whit beyond that of the Gospels themselves, and the idea that he teaches a world-renunciation of a Buddhist type is

[1] *Spirit of Flame: A Study of St John of the Cross.* By E. Allison Peers. S.C.M. Press, 6s. *Carmelite and Poet: A Framed Portrait of St John of the Cross.* By Robert Sencourt. Hollis and Carter, 15s.

proved to be altogether false. Those who have been impressed by Mr Aldous Huxley's doctrines that mysticism is of necessity an escape from an inherently evil world and that it is fundamentally incompatible with an incarnational theology will find here much that will influence them towards a change of mind.

But it is in Mr Sencourt's book, even more than in Professor Peers', that these points appear most conspicuously. The general movement of his book is much the same, though he writes at greater length; he inserts discussions of the poems and the prose commentaries at their chronological points in the narrative, and by so doing gives in a most striking way the impression of their living relevance to the practical problems and the historical events of the Carmelite reform. In this way we are given just that indication of what was purely transient in the circumstances of their composition which is so necessary if they are to be intelligently applied to the different conditions of the present day. The very strongest emphasis is laid upon the fact that St John was a poet, with all a poet's love of natural beauty; but this is never allowed to obscure the primary fact that the one absorbing passion of his life was the entire fulfilment of the will of God. In some respects Mr Sencourt does for St John what the Abbé Hoornaert did for St Teresa in his book *St Teresa in her Writings*; he writes not only as a student of mysticism but also as a lover of great literature; and his book is addressed to a slightly more sophisticated public than is that of Professor Peers. Incidentally, he gives a discussion of the relation of St John's teaching to the nature-mysticism of Wordsworth and other English writers which it is interesting to compare with the similar discussion of Richard Jefferies by Mr E. I. Watkin at the end of *The Philosophy of Mysticism*.

A few comments may be added on particular points in Mr Sencourt's book. On page 206 the interesting suggestion is made that the reason for the almost extreme stress which St John lays on detachment from images and even from thought is to be found in the fact that he was both intensely intellectual and intensely poetic; hence he recognized in himself the need for detachment from the things of both intellect and sense in a way that was quite unnecessary, for example, in the case of St Teresa. Again, it is made perfectly clear that the Incarnation, the Liturgy and the Church are central to St John's life, and that if he rarely mentions them it is because he takes them for granted (pp. 200, 207); there is no foundation for the view that St John was really a Buddhist or Plotinian mystic who had the misfortune to be born in a Catholic country. The remark on page 161 that "it is plain . . . that St John uses the word sensuality as equivalent to our human nature. It is everything which reaches the human spirit through the psychology of man" is surely misleading. Is not the very basis of St John's discussion the scholastic doctrine that in the psychology of man there are *two* levels of operation, the sensual or sensitive and the intellectual or spiritual respectively? And have not the last few pages an "escapist" flavour that the author would not really wish to maintain?

It may be well in concluding to stress the importance of the teaching

of St John for all those who have any share in the direction of souls. For, at any rate in their active form, the Dark Nights are not the property of a select spiritual aristocracy but are a perfectly normal phenomenon in the spiritual life of any Christian who is trying to make real progress. Unfortunately, very often through lack of understanding on the part of directors, people are frequently allowed to fall into scrupulosity, despair, or downright disillusionment and unbelief when they begin to enter into the Night, instead of being assured that they are in fact being led to a closer union with God. Abbot Chapman remarks that "in the eighteenth century the commonest result was the feeling of being hated by God, and of being doomed to Hell" (one thinks of the poet Cowper), while "in this century a very common form is even more horrible—temptations against Faith" (*Spiritual Letters*, p. 141); we might add that in the Church of England the result is often a decision that after all the Church of England cannot be part of the Catholic Church—if one only "goes over" everything will come right again! One of the greatest needs of the Church if her members are to be equal to the colossal tasks which confront them today is the building up of a really strong, unsentimental and self-sacrificing life of prayer which will enable Christians to meet monotony with perseverance and suffering with fortitude; and there is no master of spirituality who can help so much in this task as St John of the Cross. For this reason both Professor Peers and Mr Sencourt deserve the Church's gratitude for their excellent books, but they would doubtless be the first to affirm that they had failed in their task if their readers were satisfied with studying their works without going on from these to the writings of the great Carmelite Doctor himself.

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Lincoln.

Pastor's Plea

The subject of this paper is the relation between theology and pastoral work. It is a crucially important subject, involving the whole question of Christian strategy in the present situation, and perhaps I shall be forgiven if I begin by engaging in the fashionable pastime of diagnosis. There seem, indeed, to be only two kinds of publicists at work today—the blue-print merchants and the diagnosers—and that very fact is perhaps symptomatic of our trouble. My excuse for adding my humble contribution to the estimates which so many eminent people have produced of late must be that mine has, I believe, the distinction of being one stage more pessimistic than theirs!

We have this curious and aggravating situation, that the ball ought to be at the feet of us Christians, we ought to be scoring goals and we just aren't. The other side, recently so proudly arrayed against us, is in a state of utter confusion. There is Dr Joad rushing about the field kicking the ball in both directions. Huxley (J.) and Huxley (A.) are in continual danger of putting it through their own goal. Stalin shakes hands with the Patriarch. It is the kind of situation that we have dreamed of, yet we seem to be incapable of taking advantage of it.

We do a certain amount of pretty dribbling among ourselves and occasionally take an inept shot which goes well over the bar, as when somebody organizes a National Mission of Repentance and Hope or a Recall to Religion. Meanwhile, there is no small danger that the crowd, which we are so signally failing to satisfy, will break loose and turn our polite playing pitch into a scene of mob rule and proletarian orgy. Yet most of the members of the crowd would be glad to be given something to shout about—to be invigorated—and would support a side which showed signs of playing with purpose and conviction. Do not bishops tell us that the populace is just yearning for what they (the bishops) suppose that we have got up our sleeves? But the plain fact is this—that we are hardly less Mother Hubbards than the others. If they are baffled, so are we, and we cannot for ever go on hiding up the fact that we are baffled by pointing out how baffled the others are. If their cupboards are bare, so is ours—"and so the poor doggie had none."

We, too, are floundering. We, too, in common with the world, are bankrupt. But no—there is a difference. We have, so we firmly believe, the needed banking account and a cheque book called the Bible. The trouble is that we seem to have forgotten how to draw the cheques. Thus we are deprived of effective currency and are reduced to polishing up medieval Peter's Pence and mid-European coins of the sixteenth century—some of us have a selection of both in our purses. For it is important to observe that it is not only the foolish liberals who find themselves in this deplorable condition. Admittedly the property in which they invested was built on sand, but we can hardly be content that the rock-built house bequeathed to us shall remain a mere ancient monument and ourselves hired guides to the decreasing stream of tourists.

To the blue-print merchants and diagnosers I should have added the antiquaries. Here again we display the very same symptoms as the world. Those who look back to a golden age before the Industrial Revolution and Enclosures—the Merry Englanders—have their counterpart among theologians and especially among liturgists. A baffling present produces this nostalgia. It is an ill sign when it is not kept in its proper place among the hobbies, when it is allowed to predominate. But these are only a few among many ill signs—this hankering after the past, this ineffective introspection. My point is this—that we also are involved in the situation and we also are puzzled. It is not only the post-scripters who sing their pretty ditties. One has heard such ditties proceeding from clerical-collared throats and sometimes those throats have walked on gaitered legs. Whenever I hear such expressions as "Christ the hope of the world" or "the Christian solution" or even "the Kingdom of God," I find myself wanting to shout: "Words, words, words!" If it is at a diocesan conference, everybody claps. If it is on Blackpool sands, everybody gapes and I gape with them. For half the time when we talk like that it is the most utter humbug, and if somebody were to question us more exactly we should have no more idea what to answer than would the educationists if they were asked what they meant by the word "spiritual."

What then? The first need is, I take it, that we should honestly recognize that we are in this bad way. Of course, we have to cover up the nakedness of the land and, fortunately for us, the present-day spies do not seem to be very intelligent; otherwise we could hardly get away with the kind of things that are said daily on "Religion and Life" campaigns. But among ourselves—surely we should be far happier if we gave up all pretending. Then, too, we might really be brought to our knees, our Bibles and our theology, and thus find—or be given—a message that is more than a compound of abstruseness and sentiment. When writing or speaking is abstruse, as so much recent theology has been abstruse, it almost invariably means that the writer or speaker is himself not quite clear about the point that he is trying to make. Abstruseness is usually a sign of half-fledged ideas. And here one may enter a protest against jargon. Admittedly there must be technical terms, but that is quite a different matter. There is no possible need to say to English people in Greek, Latin, German or French what can be said in English. This horrible babel of tongues invades even the pulpit. One suspects that it is often a form of snobbishness. There is a detestable satisfaction to be had in rolling round one's tongue some word unknown outside the universities. I have sometimes thought that if it fell to me to set a paper in the General Ordination examination, I would frame one of the questions on these lines: "Turn into plain English the following sentences," and then I would quote a few of the richer obscurities of some living theologians.

If there is to be any relation at all between theology and pastoral work, the theologians must discipline their too fecund vocabularies. It is not that our people lack brains, but that they live outside the rarified atmosphere of the theological circles. So, for that matter, do most of us clergy. There is a text which one could wish that every professional theologian might have written up over his mantelpiece: "They were as sheep not having a shepherd." For I reckon that the theologian, if he is to be of any real service to Christ's flock, must be a pastor at heart. He may not write for Mrs Jones or Mrs Smith, but he will not shut the image of them out of his study, and closet himself exclusively with St Thomas or St John of the Cross.

I say that he may not write for Mrs Jones or Mrs Smith, but there is especial need for plain readable books of theology for the faithful. I do not mean apologetic. There is a more urgent task than apologetic and that is to strengthen our brethren. It is really amazing the faithfulness with which the lay-folk, who have neither the background nor incentives of the clergy, have stuck to what to all outward appearances has been a sinking ship. And sometimes we have despised them. I wonder, would those who speak of "holy hens" have applied the same term to Mary Magdalen and Joanna, the wife of Chuza? These are, in fact, God's own, committed to us by Him, and I fancy that our first duty is to prepare them for a tough time ahead, first by telling them—what they are ready to believe—that "the gates of hell shall not prevail," and secondly by grounding them on a very much stronger foundation than that with which we have provided them up to now. We have been so busy trying to entice the man in the street out of the

street that we have paid too little attention to the faithful. I know that the contrary is commonly said to be the case, but I believe that mine is the true account of what has been happening. I know of very few books of theology which I can usefully put into the hands of the average lay-folk. Some are difficult and some are dull and some seem merely to consist in a rehash of the addresses which the writer gave last Lent. There is a great opening of usefulness for a skilled theologian who will recognize that the laity are neither Sunday-school children nor philosophers. Perhaps one of the things that we have to learn is that we are not really cleverer than they. It is merely that we have had a different training. And if we suddenly found ourselves planted down in the Stock Exchange or, for that matter, in the factory, we should be no less confounded than they are by the Epistle to the Ephesians.

I said that the professional theologian needs to have something of a pastor's heart. It is also necessary that the pastor should be something of a theologian. But here the whole situation in which he finds himself involved, at least in the Church of England, conspires to prevent him. Everyone from bishops downwards works feverishly to distract the parish priest from praying or reading. Yet there is a continual quoting of the tedious tag about the days when the Anglican clergy were *stupor mundi*. The real *stupor* is that so many of them have retained their sanity, so becudgelled are they by the great and increasing army of organizers, leaders, advisers and enthusiasts for this, that or the other undertaking who haunt cathedral cities or take their eleven o'clocks with harassed clergymen. These are the seed-plots of a perfect jungle of bright ideas, and all the time the future looms with the prospect that we shall have to devote our waking hours to raising funds to salvage such legacies as the relics of the church school system. New machinery is superimposed upon the old, and we labour to keep the immense and creaking plant going. None is ever scrapped, for all is vastly sacred, but more is added. All this besides those things which are without, that which cometh upon us daily, the care of all the parish. And St Paul never suffered from a telephone.

It is a dark picture. Doubtless we parish clergy have to accuse ourselves of much, and I think that most of us possess healthily uneasy consciences. But it is not altogether or even considerably our fault that we find ourselves thus loaded with administration. We are human and we blush to be told that it is the fault of the clergy if the Churches do not take this, that or the other opportunity, praying always that there may presently be some cessation in the spate of glorious opportunities that others see for us. We must keep all the old organizations going while throwing ourselves wholeheartedly into the new pre-service units. We must visit the parish and at the same time attend the committee concerned with the latest scheme or gesture. We must treat our people as financial milch-cows—others handle the churns: the parish clergy drive the herd and do the milking. All this and very much else, while we have grown fewer, and of those fewer more and more are taken away from pastoral work in the vain hope that organization will generate faith.

But what has all this got to do with the relation between pastoral

work and theology? Very much, for this feverish chaos is proving destructive of any relation between them. The pastor is too cluttered up, too badgered, too bewildered to think and, until a stop is put to it, there will be little hope of Bible study in the parsonage, let alone in the congregation. There is need for a Self-Denying Ordinance, for another Root and Branch, not in this case for the destruction of episcopacy but of the innumerable new posts, committees, organizations, activities and movements, each of them somebody's pet, that have arisen in the Church. "For sale, one hundred and fifty large offices in London, together with three thousand typewriters, the proceeds to be given to the provision of kneeling pads and clerical libraries"; "Curacy sought by former and penitent organizing secretary"; "*How to say No*, by a Converted Bishop, Mowbray and Co., 2s. 6d." When advertisements such as these begin to appear, there will be hope.

The Church of to-day should be to a large extent a waiting Church, and one of our prayers should be a prayer for faith to wait. For prophecy is our crying need. Prophecy is a far greater need than what is called evangelization. Indeed, I can think of few things that I should dislike more than to be "evangelized," and the public appears to share my sentiments. But prophecy is heaven-sent—you cannot manufacture it. Nothing is more grotesque than artificial prophecy. But you can perhaps produce conditions that will be congenial to prophecy. Most certainly you can produce conditions calculated to stifle it. I do not think that we should despair of prophecy arising within the Church, within the ministry and among the faithful of the Church, within the systems that have been bequeathed to us. It is a misreading of history to suppose that prophecy is a monopoly of the free-lance. I cannot see why a pastoral ministry should not become, at least to a degree, genuinely prophetic, as it is not now. But before that can happen the pastor will have to be freed from much that besets him, much that is well-meaning, much that is not really pastoral at all, much that distracts him and his people from the living waters.

Frank Bennett.

Neston-in-Wirral.

Literature of Religious Education (1943)

A survey of the literature of religious education promotes a perplexity which it may be crucial for the student of current events to share and criticize. The secular educationist finds in education the matrix of the post-war world, which he is already planning with enterprise and learning. For him education (to change the metaphor) is not an adjunct; it is his fulcrum. Undeterred by the rationing of paper, he produces the books which show his hopes for a new generation of men, women, and their children, who shall learn through education to take their due place in human society. He produces the materials for discussion groups and the variety of textbooks required in the classrooms, together with books (like Duncan's *Education of the Ordinary Child*) which record the discoveries of the research student.

A year's reading of the literature of religious education shows that

we have nothing comparable in scope or method in the field of Christian education among the books submitted to the present surveyor. In the domain of Christian sociology, so rich and promising in many ways, no one seems to be connecting religious education with the post-war world. Whereas our Lord, on Ascension Day, made "teaching" the backbone of the Church's evangelism, no one seems to be connecting religious education closely with the salvation of this country, or of this world. In our religious literature theology sits unchallenged at the centre of the circle, whilst religious education is accorded a courtesy place somewhere on the circumference. The educationist may be loyal to theology, which was perhaps his first love, and yet plead that theology, unless it is to be introverted, must fail in its purpose unless its throne is shared by a science which studies the ways of making the fruits of theology available to adults and their children.

Quite outstanding in the year's work is *Unto a Full-Grown Man*, by S. H. Evans and E. W. Southcott (S.P.C.K., 3s. 6d.). The authors have devised a new technique for youth discussion groups under the name of "Corporate Mental Action." The book contains full outlines of such "actions," based on an ingenious compound of meditation, discussion, and worship. Youth is also the subject of *Young Christian Workers*, by V. Rochford (Burns and Oates, 1s.), which gives an account of the English Roman Catholic organization for young people, based on the Jocist movement. *Thinking Out the Faith*, by T. Grigg-Smith (S.P.C.K., 2s. 6d.) provides notes to be used with discussion groups.

There are two lesson books. *Lesson Notes on the Prayer Book*, by B. F. L. Clarke (S.P.C.K., 3s.), gives a handy summary of the material which a teacher would require for the construction of lessons. *Public School Divinity*, by J. C. L. Dart (S.P.C.K., 5s.), is the outcome of an experienced priest's work as a war-time chaplain at Radley. There is a most useful outline of Christian doctrine to cover three years, but the scheme does not seem to provide adequately for senior boys. It is a mistake to suggest that for those who have passed the School Certificate "interest [in Church history] can be aroused by fixing attention on the great heroes of the Church." Boys at this stage are reading connected secular history, and their capacities should not be underrated in religious studies. Those in the Sixth Form (and many in the Fifth) are ready for an alliance of Church History, Comparative Religion, the Psychology of Religion, and Christian Ethics, when the right books shall have been made available.

Four books are for the children's own reading. *St Luke's Story of Jesus*, by Hope Costley-White (S.P.C.K., 5s.), gives a simple outline of the Gospel and good illustrative pictures suitable for seven+. *The Catechism Simply Explained*, by Michael Bruce (S.P.C.K., 1s.), justifies an exacting title. Here is an invaluable and human little commentary for the use of Confirmation candidates and full of terse material of help to their teachers. *My Parish Church*, by B. F. L. Clarke (S.P.C.K., 3s. 6d.), is a simple guide to parish church architecture for the eleven+ (and their elders). The author has a notable gift of simplification, which makes easy reading of a difficult subject. *The Children's Life of Christ*,

by Enid Blyton (Methuen, 7s. 6d.), is the kind of book that the sensitive reader opens with apprehension. But there need be no fears. It begins, as it should, with the Annunciation, and follows faithfully the outline of the Gospels. There is no minimizing of miracle or teaching, and the story is written with a masterly simplicity. Inevitably "thoughts" and "conversations" must be invented for purposes of interpretation; but they all spring naturally out of a devout and historical appreciation of the Gospels.

Three books fall outside the previous classification. *St Mark's Gospel*, by M. D. R. Willink (S.P.C.K., 2s. 6d.), gives a simple account of the chief topics of our Lord's teaching. *Education towards a Christian Society*, by Sister Mary Frances, C.R. (S.P.C.K., 6s.), provides a study of educational problems in which the chief points are the contact of the human spirit with Christ, an integrated personal life, and a Christian social philosophy. *Catechism at Early Mass*, by Fr F. H. Drinkwater (Burns and Oates, 3s. 6d.), contains 163 outlines for short instructions, based on the R.C. Catechism, by the author of the famous "Sower" system of religious instruction. For those who would preach teaching sermons, either to adults or children, these notes show how a great teacher gets to the heart of the matter, and they deserve the careful study of all teachers of Christian doctrine.

J. R. Lumb.

Chislehurst.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Doctrine of the Church in the New Testament. By George Johnstone. Cambridge University Press. 10s. 6d.

This book contains the most comprehensive treatment of its subject that can be found in any modern English work with the possible exception of Dr Flew's *Jesus and His Church*. While Dr Johnstone gives less space than Dr Flew to the sayings of Jesus which bear upon the Church, he has more to say both about the meaning of the word *ecclesia* and about the environment of Jewish and pagan thought within which the Church-consciousness of the first Christians grew. He also gives both in his bibliography and in his footnotes a very full conspectus of recent literature upon his subject. Throughout the book the conviction is present that the Church is an integral part of the Gospel of God.

Among the most valuable features of the book are the treatment of the Jewish antecedents to the conception of a Messianic community, the note on the word *ecclesia* and its Hebrew equivalents, and the analysis of St Paul's use of the word *soma*—a use which has affinities with Stoicism in its form but was utterly new in its content. Among the more distinctive views advanced in the book is the writer's contention that the new Church did not come into existence until the Resurrection. "The disciples are but forerunners of the Church which met at Jerusalem; at the last supper they were representatives of a *future* Church, which was to emerge as a visible society in history as a result

of the appearances of the risen Jesus" (p. 48). "Christianity is an Easter religion. Accordingly, the doctrine of the Church, which is the society of Christians, is not to be looked for in the teaching of Jesus" (p. 57). Rather surprisingly the writer is inclined to doubt the genuineness of the saying in Matt. xvi, 18 on the ground that the use of the word *ecclesia* therein is unparalleled in the Gospels. Since the writer's own thesis leads us to expect only isolated hints in the teaching of Jesus, it seems unreasonable to doubt the saying on account of its isolation. Reference might also have been made to K. L. Schmidt's treatment of the saying in the *Theologisches Wörterbuch*. Schmidt argues that the saying belongs to a line of thought discernible throughout the Gospels and reaching its climax in the Pauline doctrine.

The treatment of Baptism and the Eucharist is strangely cramped, and the richness of Rom. vi, 1-11 and 1 Cor. x, 17 for the understanding of the Church is nowhere drawn out. The treatment of the ministry is so slight (pp. 65-66, 95-96) that it seems a pity that it should have been included at all in a work that is otherwise exhaustive in its method. Some big conclusions are asserted concerning the ministry, but no full examination either of evidence or of doctrine is made. But the reader's disappointment in these respects will not diminish his gratitude for the book as a whole. If it lacks the penetrating exegesis of Fr Thornton's recent work, it shows the essential unity of the New Testament writers in their witness to the meaning of the Church, and the place of the Fourth Gospel as summing up the themes of the earliest presentation of Church and Gospel.

A. M. Ramsey.

Durham.

He Who Is. By E. L. Mascall. Longmans. 15s.

In the preface to this excellent treatise Fr Mascall describes his work as "purely academic," but this is to place an undue limitation on its general usefulness—indeed, the work is a most lucid exposition of the principles of Thomism, understandable by any reader of good intelligence.

To those who note the changes in what has been called the "climate of opinion," there has been nothing more important than the reaction (I use the word in its best sense) away from the Cartesian tradition; away from Kant, Hegel, Bradley and all other forms of absolute mentalism back to the acceptance of Existence as the surd of experience—to the Scholastic tradition.

An outlook for hundreds of years confined to Catholic seminaries, ever since the famous encyclical of Leo XIII in 1879 has spread from Roman students of "rational philosophy and theology," to quote the Pope's words, through the labours of Gilson, Maritain, Garrigou-Lagrange, Sertillanges, De Wulf and others to the Anglicans and now, gradually, even to the agnostics.

To this school, which Fr Mascall calls generally that of "traditional Theism," the attempt of modern theologians to make God in some manner or other dependent upon the world for His expression is altogether objectionable. Neither Pringle-Pattison, Rashdall, Ward nor

Tennant is prepared fully to concede that "the finite world derives its persistence from a free act of will upon the part of God, to whom it is altogether unnecessary and who would be in every respect complete without it," as the author of *He Who Is*, in accordance with orthodox tradition, contends.

So far, it is hoped, many who are not Gifford Lecturers would agree, but Fr Mascall goes on to assert the familiar Roman (and Thomist) insistence that "the human mind, from the consideration of finite beings, can arrive without appeal to 'religious experience' at a sure knowledge of the existence of a God, whose primary character is that of existent Being." To this thesis the work now under consideration is largely devoted.

We may pass therefore to the Five Proofs of St Thomas which in this book are critically considered in an endeavour to understand the validity of the assumption of that power of the reason in Natural Theology which is so uncongenial alike to followers of Karl Barth and his fellow-Protestants and to the modern pagan philosophers.

Unfortunately, as it seems to the reviewer, some of the arguments on which the Thomists lay stress are overinfected by an Aristotelian tradition which will find little favour among modern persons competent to speak on such matters. The first argument, from motion, which we are told was given special importance by St Thomas, is derived from Books V to VIII of the *Physics*; the Aristotelian distinction between potentiality and act, involving the idea that all motion must be put into action by another motion which brings us back to the first mover, himself unmoved. "It is necessary," says St Thomas, "to arrive at a First Mover, put in motion by no other; and this everyone understands to be God." Since the days of Newton, however, the idea of bodies persisting in a state of uniform motion except in so far as acted upon by a force—the First Law of Motion—has discredited the whole Aristotelian conception of the dynamic, and later developments, extending beyond classical mechanics, have but increased the difficulties. The distinction between immanent and transeunt causation; the notion that every existent being is a "continuant," tends to assimilate the concept of motion with that of existence in a manner which qualifies, if it does not contradict, the Aristotelian view; indeed, Fr Mascall himself is "prepared to recognize that if the modern world finds the notions of potentiality and actuality difficult to assimilate, the First Way of St Thomas will make less appeal to us than some of the others will." With the further difficulty that an infinite series of subordinate movements is not necessarily impossible and that the "Will" of God is of a different order from the movements of created beings and not comparable in a series, it would appear that the First Proof is not to be accepted without the greatest reservation.

The second way, the proof from efficient causality, is also based upon Aristotle; it is the argument of the First Cause rather than of the First Motion. As Fr Mascall concedes, however, "the question of infinite regress" must be applied here as in the case of the First Proof. Indeed, in the *Contra Gentiles* it figures as a subordinate argument, though not perhaps in the *Summa*.

The third of the cosmological arguments, as they have been called, depends upon the mutability of existents in the world. At any moment the existence of some beings is necessary; they cannot have come from nothing, for, if so, nothing would now exist. An assumption of eternal series, it is said, is eternally insufficient, for such beings are but contingent upon their history; a necessary being whose existence is involved in His own essence, God, is therefore necessary to account for the world and its continuance.

In all these three cases, says Fr Mascall (here contradicting Aristotle), infinite regress is denied. The third is the widest of the arguments, for it starts with all finite beings, arguing from their contingency to the necessity which supports them, yet this argument also depends upon a view of causation which since Hume and Kant can scarcely be accepted. Events have not distinguishable isolated efficient causes; life is too complicated and diverse for that, though, as the writer says, a network of entities which are in themselves insufficient is just as insufficient as an infinite linear sequence of them would be. But according to the mathematicians, in an infinite series all possibilities are not necessarily realized; indeed, it may be asked, if change is actual, have possibilities, other than statistical, any claim to exist as real at all? As Burdwood Evans has said, "The contingent without the necessary has become thinkable to the twentieth-century mind."

I will not disguise that to me the fourth and fifth proofs have far greater cogency. The argument from degrees of being, *pace* Fr Mascall, is far more Platonic than Aristotelian—"there must be something which is to all beings the cause of their . . . goodness and every other perfection"; the existence of finite perfection implies the existence of infinite perfection as its cause. Though Beauty is not mentioned in the *Summa* specifically as a mode of perfection, the writer correctly assumes it when he quotes St Thomas that "the beautiful is the same as the good." He concedes that St Thomas will agree with Augustine, the Platonist, that God is the eternal beauty which is the cause of beauty in all created things." The fifth argument, from design, is also free from the difficulties of the almost mechanical relating of God with the world implicit in the cosmological arguments, a relation which the writer so justifiably deplores; indeed, it is not too much to say that it is the prevailing heresy of our times.

Natural things, says St Thomas, act for an end so as to obtain the best result; intelligent beings, given free will, if they would fulfil the nature of their being, have their end in the exemplification of perfection in so far as they pursue holiness. In the later deistic teleological interpretation of the argument we arrive at the "best of all possible worlds." Waste, pain and evil are justified. How far St Thomas would press this presentation is not clear; he seemed to accept the Aristotelian view that existence as such is a final good, but such an arid view is mitigated by the Platonic assumption of the world being a pattern of the eternal in so far as the perfections of God find lodgment in it. So stated the argument appears still very cogent. How far Fr Mascall (who speaks of the religion of Plato as "largely false") would accept the gloss of the reviewer is another matter.

In conclusion, this book cannot be too highly commended; it is hoped that an accompanying volume on the attributes of God, here less closely discussed than His existence, will one day be forthcoming.

POSTBRIDGE. HENRY SLESSER.

THE REVELATION OF THE WORD: A RECONSTRUCTIVE OUTLINE OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY. By H. G. England. John Murray. 7s. 6d.

At the very outset Canon England disarms criticism. For in the prologue he tells us that he resigned his benefice to devote himself to the study of the thesis of his book, a thesis which, he tells us, "assumes a new revelation originating more from intuition than intellect" (p. 1).

The basis of the argument is a radical regrouping of the three Persons of the Trinity so that the orthodox account of their relationship is entirely undermined. In the first place the Logos, by whom all things are created, is identified with the Holy Spirit. This is the foundation of all that follows. The third Person of the traditional doctrine of the Trinity assumes the characteristics and functions of the second Person and the Holy Spirit becomes God's agent in creation. The third Person of this new Trinity is the Son of God. He comes into being within the time process as the Son of Man, born of Mary, and is God's instrument for reconciling the world to Himself.

Out of all this two further points are developed. First, that until the coming of the Son in the Incarnation, the Godhead consisted only of two Persons, the Father and the Logos, who is the Holy Spirit. Second, if all this is true then a development must have taken place within the Godhead. Canon England does not shrink from this; he welcomes it. For he says: "A change there must have been in the Individual Personality of the Father because of His more intimate relationship with the Son of Man, and also a growth in the total Communal Personality which constitutes the Godhead and becomes a developing group of divine personalities, a group which may advance in due time beyond a Trinity" (p. 43). The rest of the book consists of an attempt to work out a scheme of theology based upon these novel premises.

There are times when the author argues his case with great persuasiveness, particularly when he outlines some of the advantages which would be gained by accepting his position. There can be no doubt, for instance, that the theology of the Holy Spirit has been a much neglected field of study and that orthodox theologians sometimes seem to link the third Person on to the Trinity in a rather external fashion. This new idea would also provide us with an answer to the difficult question, Who sustained the world during the period of the Incarnation when the Logos, by whom all things were created, became man?

But against all this there is much to be put on the other side. In the first place, this new conception of the Trinity does grave violence to the great pillar texts of Incarnational theology in St John and St Paul; "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us," and "For in him were all things created, in the heaven and upon the earth." Not only

is the Bible against this new strange teaching, but so is the witness and experience of the Church as well. The Church has already hammered out her theology of the Trinity and it has stood the test of centuries of her life. Another objection to the theory is that it makes one Person of the Trinity a creature of the time process, thus setting up what must be an essential difference between that Person and the other two. This may seem an abstract distinction, but it has important consequences. For the Christian message of salvation cannot be made intelligible unless the Son of Man who died on the Cross was "very God of very God." It is only by God that man can be saved, and in Canon England's theology the Son of Man is less than God, for like ourselves He has been created in time.

Perhaps the most fundamental objection to the argument of this book is that it mistakes entirely the character of theology. For the basis of theology is not the deliverances of the human intellect or of human intuition. The basis of theology is revelation. The substance of theology is what God has declared, not what man is able to think out for himself. Whatever else we may expect of the theologian, it is not his business to invent new dogmas.

This book fails because it attempts to include revelation within the sphere of human reason or, should I say, of intuition. Even so keen an intellectualist as St Thomas Aquinas realized that at any rate the doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation could not be dealt with within the limits of natural reason alone. That, it seems to me, is exactly what Canon England has tried to do and, in spite of the title of his book, its contents can only appeal to those who either have not understood or cannot sympathize with the Christian idea of revelation.

PENTROBIN. J. H. JACQUES.

SHORTER NOTICES

K. L. Schmidt: *Die Judenfrage im Lichte der Kapital* 9-11 *des Römerbriefes* (Theologische Studien, herausgegaben von Karl Barth, Heft 13). (Zurich Fr. 3).

The Jew is a tragic figure in Europe to-day. No one who has read of the persecution of the Jews under the impulse of the Nazis can be ignorant of that. And yet it is easy to miss the true nature of the tragedy of the Jew. For the true tragedy of the Jew arises from his vocation—arises also from the fact that in rejecting the Messiah he has been false to his vocation.

In this pamphlet Professor Karl Ludwig Schmidt examines the problem of the Jews in the light of the ninth to the eleventh chapters of St Paul's Epistle to the Romans. First, he raises the problem, "What is a Jew?" The word *Jew* meant in origin a descendant of Judah, and since it was only the Southern Kingdom that was restored after the Exile the word was used of all Israelites in contrast to Gentiles. But Judaism was above all a religion. It was possible to become a Jew by submitting to the rite of circumcision, and many

Arabs did become Jews (Esther viii, 17). Similarly a Jew who became a Christian was no longer a Jew but a member of a New Race. But he might still be a *Hebrew*. The members of the New Race claimed to be members of the true *Israel*, the true People of God.

St Paul speaks of the vocation of Israel in Romans ix, 4-5. The promises to Israel must be fulfilled and will be fulfilled in the New Israel, the Church (Romans ix, 6-8). Israel after the flesh therefore is rejected (Romans ix, 31-2). But St Paul will not accept that as a final judgment (Romans x, i). He will have it both ways (Romans xi, 25-6).

The Jew is not as other men. This is not a consequence of Semitic descent, but because he is called of God (Esther iii, 8-9). Anti-Semitism is a misnomer. The attack is against the People of God. But the Jew has fallen from his high standing without ceasing to be a member of a peculiar People. That is his tragedy.

J. O. Cobham.

Against the Grain. By A. W. Hopkinson. Mowbray. 1s. 9d.

Mr Hopkinson publishes these studies in Christian forgiveness, believing that "never in the course of human history has it been more against the grain to love your enemies." He dwells at some length on the tradition of hatred which he says has always characterized the Jew, and shows how our Lord dealt with the four objects of His people's hatred—the Samaritans, renegade Jews, hellenizing Gentiles, and the Roman oppressors. The divine forgiveness is then expounded as the model of human forgiveness.

The writer has little fresh to say about forgiveness, but no doubt the familiar truths need repetition and enforcement to-day. It seems doubtful whether the sinister prominence given to the tradition of hatred in the national and religious life of Judaism is altogether deserved.

H. B.

Aids to Worship in the Forces and Parishes. By W. W. S. March. S.P.C.K. 6d.

This is a good collection of war-time prayers, prefaced by wise directions as to how to lead congregations in prayer. It will be especially useful to Chaplains to the Forces.

NOTE

The quota of paper for periodicals is being increased, but the increase may be used only for printing more copies, not for enlarging the present size of Theology. We have had for some time to refuse many would-be subscribers. It will now be possible to accept them. The suggestion can also be made again that an annual subscription to Theology is a suitable Christmas present.

CORRESPONDENCE

ART AND THE BIBLE

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

SIR,

There is a common opinion that an interest in art cannot easily be defended on the authority of Holy Scripture. This seems to me to be reflected in the closing paragraphs of an otherwise admirable article by Mr T. S. R. Boase in the November issue of THEOLOGY. May I suggest that Exodus xxv-xxviii and xxxv-xxxix form a convenient starting-point for an exploration of the other side of the question? A commentary on these chapters will be found in Hebrews viii-x, which also refers us to 2 Chronicles iii and iv. The gist of the matter is that there is a "pattern in the mount" revealed to the craftsmen who are to rear up the Tabernacle and to fashion its furniture. They are not passive instruments; they themselves are filled with the spirit of God "in wisdom and understanding and in all manner of workmanship." But their designs are not wholly their own. They are impelled to translate into earthly "types and shadows" realities beyond the range of direct description. The whole of the Psalms and the prophets, the epistles of St Paul and the Book of Revelation, seem to me to witness with singular consistency to the same idea of the function of symbols. So do the parables of the gospel.

The real tension in Jewish and Christian history is not between art and the Bible but between this biblical idea of art and another idea derived from classical culture, which seeks to idealize the natural. The wisdom of the Christian Church, following St John of Damascus, has adhered to the spirit rather than the letter of the second commandment, and allowed a place in Christian symbolism to the likeness of man and bird and beast; but every attempt to make idealized representation an end in itself has always provoked an iconoclast reaction. This has often gone much too far; but I do not believe that the latent indignation is ever, except accidentally and in particular persons, against art as such. When art is not confused with representation, the difficulty disappears for the time being.

GEORGE EVERY, S.S.M.

KELHAM.

A CHRISTIAN "RENASCENCE"?

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

SIR,

Brother Every's review of *Renascence* in your November number raises such important issues, and the tasks which "Nicodemus" has set himself in this book are of so much significance in the religious situation of our time, that another student of his book would be grateful for the opportunity of suggesting some points for further reflection which his reading of it has prompted. I will say nothing about the manner of presentation which "Nicodemus" adopts, beyond deploring a certain

tendency he displays to entangle his arguments in the sort of jargon which leads all too easily to prolixity and obscurity. The book would have been more effective if the author had cut out of it a good deal which distracts attention from his main purpose, which is, I take it, to discover what it essentially is which divides those in the modern world whose approach to reality is fundamentally antipathetic to the Christian faith from those whose approach is congruous with it, and to show (as I think he does) that this division does not lie where it is often supposed to do. What is at issue is not "goodwill," or an altruistic attitude to life, or even an appreciaiton of the "spiritual." It is a reading of man's destiny which sees revealed in it "the pattern of the Cross."

"In all real religion," says "Nicodemus," "the conception of a catastrophe, a violent breach with the course of natural being . . . is also implicit." Of this, for Christians, "the cross, in which the horizontal lines of human history are crossed by the downward and vertical movement of eternity, is the perennial symbol."[1] But the essence of what is thus symbolized is the core of that "basic, catholic (with the small 'c') federal faith in Being and Being's laws of dying unto life," that "faith in transcendent spirit as opposed to that belief in mere becoming" which for "Nicodemus" provides the great dichotomy of the modern world. On the one side stand those, largely deriving from the early Bergson, thinkers so apparently divergent as Croce, Rilke (for whom nevertheless, as the "deeply-kneeling man," "Nicodemus" has a profound admiration), Heard, Jung, Carrell and the Huxleys, who see salvation "attained primarily by human effort, a psychological evolutionism." This creed, in which "Man is the *primum mobile* of his own salvation," is attractive because, however severe the discipline to which it may point, "it seems to salvage man's shaken pride in himself." But it is "a gospel only for heroes"; it has no true answer to those who are conscious in themselves, or even in others, of human sin. "Is our consciousness, or any 'core' of it, itself good and 'holy' and capable of creation, or is there in it no more than a tarnished mirror, capable when cleansed of reflecting God? . . . That is the real and ultimate issue." "Where 'creative evolution' cries 'Go forward' to fuller consciousness, Christianity cries 'Go back to God.' " But it is not only Christianity which cries this. All "faith in transcendent spirit" drives men back to this, since it rejects "belief in mere becoming" and the *élan vital*. The Christian cannot dilute his faith: "the real Christianity of the Incarnation is one and indivisible and cannot be diluted"; but the Christian must go forth and meet all those who have rejected the "telluric" faith in the unaided potentiality of man, and can meet them "upon the circumference of an orb of faith in Being of which the core remains an undiluted Christianity."

This quest for and trust in the possibility of what "Nicodemus" calls

[1] Nicodemus, fervent admirer as he is of Eliot, might have related his sentence to the poet's lines:

> Man's curiosity searches past and future
> And clings to that dimension. But to apprehend
> The point of intersection of the timeless
> With time, is an occupation for the saint.

(rather hazardously) a "federal faith" is what this rather confused and confusing book is really "about." It is a high theme with which the author wrestles, and he must be forgiven if (as I think) it throws him occasionally. I am not a theologian; I have no authority to tell "Nicodemus" or those who read him where I believe that he strays from the strait path of Catholic orthodoxy. But it is on orthodoxy that this author, for all his eager and visionary speculation, in the last resort, takes his stand, so that reference to the matter is not irrelevant. I think then that in the first place "Nicodemus" is somewhat too sanguine about the "syncretic" possibilities of his "federal faith," which leaves too much out, and is founded exclusively on one side of the Christian teaching about Man. There is a false optimism about man, and "Nicodemus" is very acute in his analysis of it, but there is a false pessimism too into which religion has often fallen, and he seems to have been so much influenced by Neo-Calvinism as at any rate to come very near to falling into it. Moreover, as Brother Every has pointed out, in his reaction against "fertility faith" "Nicodemus" sometimes shows himself altogether too suspicious of the natural. There is indeed scarcely any "doctrine of creation" in this book, just as in Mr Massingham's brilliant pioneering essay, *The Tree of Life*, there is, theologically speaking, scarcely anything else. When "Nicodemus" says that Christianity "consists solely of, or subsists solely in, catastrophe," I think he is led astray by the fact that it is the great catastrophic moments upon which religious history naturally concentrates, and this tends to obscure for those, like him, most conscious of the spiritual crisis of our time, the more "immanental" element in God's dealings with man. Certainly the faith of a Christian requires him to be ready for anything, however shattering, but this does not justify him in forgetting the "seed growing secretly," or that

> the slow watches of the night
> Not less to God belong.

But more important even than this is a curious feature of this book which is a clue, I think, to something lacking in it. "Nicodemus" is so insistent on the helplessness of man without grace that it is remarkable that he has hardly anything to say, even by way of derogation, of the means of grace established by the Authority he acknowledges. This book contains practically no reference to the Church nor to the sacraments. What is perhaps stranger still, it contains scarcely any reference to that Incarnate Lord from whom the faith on which it stands takes its name "Nicodemus" may reply that there is a sufficient library of Christology, while we hear too little of the Spirit in Christian theology. This may be, but for the Christian "renascence" must begin with a rebirth in Christ; and a critic might complain that this so introspective essay, this Christian "Hamlet," leaves out the Prince of Peace.

Yours faithfully,
MAURICE B. RECKITT.

GREENWAYS,
GUILDOWN,
GUILDFORD.

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